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ABSTRACT

The formal and substantive traits of the television program, "60 Minutes" reflect characteristics manifest in Daniel Boorstin's conception of the "pseudo-event." Through both the verbal and visual imagery presented in the context of a narrative format, this television news magazine illustrates the significance of mass media artifacts as "rhetorical document." The program, because it is inherently a value-oriented interpretation of the world, engages in a selection of reality and therefore, a deflection of reality. The linguistic and visual imagery helps to shape the viewer's perceptions of ideas, people, and institutions through the dramatic portrayal of events that both reflect and act upon the climate of opinion of the times. "60 Minutes" represents an end product that is the result of intersubjective agreement between the researchers, writers, correspondents, producers, and camerapersons responsible for this genre of media rhetoric. The verbal and visual imagery represent linguistic/graphic patterns that project perceptual images from rhetor to auditor. (Author/FL)

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"60 MINUTES" AS PSEUDO-EVENT:

THE SOCIAL DEFLECTION OF REALITY

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"60 MINUTES" AS PSEUDO-EVENT:

THE SOCIAL DEFLECTION OF REALITY

Recent examination of the media "pseudo-event" and its symbiotic relationship with television represents an overwhelming response to Daniel J. Boorstin's thoughtful, yet damning portrayal of the pseudo-event and the "image" of reality.[1] Rhetorical critics and media analysts alike have investigated this relationship through both social scientific and critical modes of research.[2] One central theme that runs through these analyses is the "dramatic," albeit contrived depiction of reality that is disseminated via television. Television newscasting is an area of programming that is especially conducive for examining the nature of the pseudo-event and the image of reality it creates for an audience. David Altheide states that the "organizational, practical, and other mundane features of newswork promote a way of looking at events which fundamentally distorts them."[3] Epstein explores "the resurrection of reality" in network newscasts,[4] while Gerbner and Gross suggest that television (both entertainment and news programming) cultivates a common "consciousness" in society through the saturation of television fare.[5]

The purpose of this essay will be to examine one genre of television newscasting, the "newsmagazine," as a pseudo-event that shapes our images of reality through the conceptual lens of network news. Specifically, the popular CBS program, "60 Minutes," will be analyzed to discover those formal and substantive characteristics that shape the viewer's perception of the world through a mediated-rhetorical document. The content or verbal imagery constitutes the "story lines," "ideological" language,

thematic content, and verbal depictions of the "antagonist" versus the "protagonist." The visual imagery includes consideration of camera angles, "special effects," nonverbal symbolism, and the editing process. The visual imagery serves to either reinforce or contradict the verbal messages, while both types of imagery are given meaning and rhetorical force through the narrative-dramatistic structure of "60 Minutes," or any other media pseudo-event.

Characteristics of the Pseudo-Event

Boorstin's depiction of the pseudo-event and its relationship to "image" is crucial for an understanding of how "60 Minutes" shapes our perceptions of social reality. Boorstin states that, "What the pseudo-event is in the world of fact, the image is in the world of value. The image is a pseudo-ideal."[6] In differentiating the pseudo-event from "spontaneous" events, Boorstin suggests that the former is not spontaneous, but "planned, planted, or incited," primarily "for the purpose of being reported or reproduced," while its "relation to the underlying reality of the situation is ambiguous," and is usually intended "to be a self-fulfilling prophecy."[7] Moreover, in relation to spontaneous or "live" news, the formulaic pseudo-event is "more dramatic," "easier to disseminate and to make vivid," "selected for newsworthy and dramatic interest," and "more sociable, more conversable, and more convenient to witness."[8] Finally, Boorstin claims that "pseudo-events spawn other pseudo-events in geometric progression. They dominate our consciousness simply because there are more of them, and ever more."[9] (Italics mine.)

Although "60 Minutes" is most assuredly, according to the above

criteria established by Boorstin, a paradigm of the pseudo-event, the concept of "image" illuminates even further the nature of the television "newsmagazine" format and its capacity to "cultivate" our consciousness. Boorstin states that, "An image in this sense is not simply a trademark, a design, a slogan, or an easily remembered picture. It is a studiously crafted personality profile of an individual, institution, corporation, product, or service."[10] It is this depiction of "image" that lends itself to the format of "60 Minutes" in that the images transmitted by the newsmagazine are synthetic, or "created especially to serve a purpose, to make a certain kind of impression."[11] In addition, this image must be believable, vivid, concrete, simplified, and ambiguous.[12] It may be argued that "60 Minutes" is indeed believable as a source of trustworthiness created through audience identification, but as a result of its dramatic and narrative format, the images conveyed are necessarily vivid, concrete, simplified, and ambiguous.

The synthetic nature of television newscasting and the imagery inherent in its form and content is indeed purposive and creates value-oriented impressions through both <u>verbal</u> and <u>visual</u> imagery. This takes place against the backdrop of a narrative and dramatistic structure. From its "themes" or "story lines," to the loaded or ideological language employed during a typical story, "60 Minutes" personifies the synthetic nature of "image" in the pseudo-event. The impressions created by "60 Minutes" serve as a persuasive depiction of reality; they create various value-oriented images of persons, organizations, and governmental agencies which serve to shape, alter, deflect, and distort our perceptions of society.

The Rhetoric of "60 Minutes"

Television's most popular newsmagazine reaches an audience of approximately 50 million viewers each week. To focus on the rhetorical nature of "60 Minutes" the critic necessarily needs to recognize the legitimacy of investigating a non-oratorical form of persuasion. Although the critic shifts from the traditional speech or piece of public discourse, the artifact of the television newscast in general, and "60 Minutes" in particular, remains highly rhetorical because it is a value-oriented interpretation of reality that is presented through various conceptual lenses. Walter R. Fisher explains this function of rhetorical discourse when he states that

> . . . rhetorical discourse creates an "image," a value-oriented interpretation, of some part of the world. Images are composites of empirical and non-empirical knowledge; they are dynamic and vary in clarity, stability, and strength. Most important, images always reflect how one ought to behave in regard to their subject matter . . . not only does rhetorical communication recommend a way of viewing a subject, it also implies a conception of the audience that attends and the communicator who presents it. One may hypothesize that rhetorical discourse will be persuasive to the extent that the image it creates regarding a subject corresponds with the image already held by the audience, the degree to which the image it implies of the audience corresponds with the self-images held by members of the audience, and the degree to which the image assumed in the message and its presentation by the communicator is attractive to the audience.[13]

Kenneth Boulding stresses the symbolic and rhetorical nature of the image which constitutes the subjective knowledge of individuals and the world they experience.[14] Gregg states that this "subjective knowledge structure consists not only of images of fact, but also of images of value which offer standards of judgement on some basis of good or bad.

The combination of what individuals perceive in any sense and what they think about what they perceive makes it clear that they deal with symbolic reality."[15] It is Boulding who claims that these images are shared through public discourse and then places them in a "rhetorical" context when he states, "The whole art of persuasion is the art of perceiving the weak spots in the images of others and of prying them apart with well constructed symbolic messages."[16] Gregg places this concept of image in a direct relationship with how we perceive social reality when he asserts that, "The rhetor in turn is one who attempts to manipulate images by the use of language. His choice of words and his manner of linguistic expression may reveal to some extent his perception of himself and his reality."[17] The remainder of this essay will examine "60 Minutes" as a "celluloid rhetor" manipulating images through verbal and visual imagery through narrative-dramatic form.

Verbal Imagery in "60 Minutes"

Kenneth Burke, in Language as Symbolic Action, posits that language molds and alters how we view the world. Through our "terministic screens" we socially construct reality. Burke states that, "Even if any given terminology is a reflection of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a deflection of reality."[18] The "60 Minutes" program, through the use of "story lines" and ideological language, serves as a paradigm for Burke's theory of terministic screens as it depicts the world in a manner that "deflects" reality through verbal imagery.

There are a limited number of "lines of argument" in "60 Minutes." These themes, or what I would call "story lines," serve a labeling

function throughout each story or segment. The story lines are value-oriented and are reflected in the "titles" of each segment and the language throughout the entire text of each story. The story lines center around such themes as"The Big Ripoff," "Corruption in Government," "Little Guy versus the Establishment," "The Big Lie," "How to Beat the System," "Justice-Injustice," and "The Unique Individual." These themes are reflected and reinforced in the verbal imagery of the "title" of each "60 Minutes" story. For example, a story on insurance companies cheating minority and elderly citizens by charging inflated prices for minimal insurance coverage was titled "Soak the Poor."[19] The following passage from this story illustrates how certain "evaluative" language reflects the "Ripoff" theme, the connotative title, and verbal imagery that shapes the audience's perception of "reality" about insurance companies:

> "Soak the Poor" is the story of something called industrial insurance. It's not insurance for big business. It's for poor people--poor people's insurance. It costs just pennies a week, but those pennies add up to billions across the country, and some of the biggest insurance companies in America have sold it. There's forty billion dollars' worth currently in force, and it is some of the most expensive available anyplace. . . . The value of the average policy is about seven hundred dollars, and the average industrial policyholder is poor, unsophisticated and gullible. . . . If they're (blacks and elderly) buying industrial insurance and monthly ordinarily, they are being--being ripped off.

The passage demonstrates the persuasive and judgmental nature of verbal imagery employed in a typical "60 Minutes" segment. It functions to create certain images in the minds of the audience through ideological language. Moreover, it serves to establish <u>competing factions</u> of "protagonist" and "antagonist" as it reflects the dramatic and symbolic

nature of the media pseudo-event.

In another segment of "60 Minutes," the opening story was titled, "Heavy Traffic." This particular story dealt with the illegal importation of marijuana into Florida's "Gold Coast." The antagonists in this drama were the drug smugglers who were depicted as "dopers," a handful of enterprising capitalists," and "dope smugglers," while their actions were defined in the following manner: "One of the doper's favorite tactics is to fly drugs out of Columbia in large airplanes, then drop the bails at a predesignated spot in the swamp, to be picked up by cohorts on the ground." This imagery was contrasted vividly from the manner in which "60 Minutes" portrayed the protagonists of the story, the Coast Guard. They were depicted as crusaders or freedom fighters of the sea who were up against tremendous adversity and overwhelming odds, but remained relentless in their pursuit of the "dopers." The following passage illustrates this image after the Coast Guard had been successful in seizing a large quantity of marijuana from a Columbian vessel off the Florida coast: "So the game was over. The ship which had been detained was now seized. The Columbians were arrested and taken aboard the Diligence . . . . And to sum up: on this one caper the Coast Guard got its quary. They'll fly their marijuana flag into the Miami station, add a hash mark to indicate another kill." Thus, the verbal imagery illustrates the nature of the dramatic and conflicting nature of protagonist and antagonist through what Kenneth Burke and Richard Weaver would call "god" and "devil" terms, loaded language that affects our perceptions of social interaction and the cast of characters involved in the drama of the television newsmagazine. This verbal imagery manifest in "60 Minutes" illustrates the

dramatic nature of each segment, while shaping the viewer's perception of some individual, organization, or institution. A story entitled, "Holy Smoke," provided an example of what I would call "anti-ethos" or subversive rhetoric against a religious sect in Florida that regarded marijuana as a sacrament and a vital activity for their worship. The depiction of the sect undermined the ethos of the group, while casting a negative light on their intentions and sincerity.

Another example of linguistic imagery was evidenced in a story entitled, "Who Stole Superman?," which examined the illegal reproduction of current films and movies on the black market. The antagonists in this particular segment were labeled "modern day pirates" who made substantial profits through these illegal video-tape reproductions.

Finally, a story that investigated charges of illegal practices in this country's race tracks, charged various members of the horse racing business as "fixing" races. The antagonists were depicted as "disreputable trainers, disreputable owners, disreputable participants who will use every device known to mankind to win a race. They don't care if its administering drugs to a horse, bribing a jockey, using an electric battery. It makes no difference to them as long as they win the race." Thus, the set "themes" advanced by "60 Minutes," which are reflected in the "titles" of each segment and in the language of the story are verbal imagery which adds to the dramatic nature of the program. The language established a conflict between protagonist versus antagonist and necessarily was influential in affecting how the viewer perceived reality.

Visual Imagery in "60 Minutes"

The rhetorical critic who chooses to explicate a visual artifact such as television news, provides an incomplete analysis by neglecting the visual imagery and the persuasive nature of the visual symbol. Several scholars have examined the persuasive nature of the visual aspect of television newscasting.[20]

The variations of camera angles, the nonverbal symbolism of visual content, and the relationship between verbal and visual imagery, in addition to the implications of the editing processes in television newscasting are worth consideration by the critic.

A close-up or a "tight shot" and camera angle may very well connote either emotion or superiority of a figure being filmed. "60 Minutes" typically employs extremely close-up shots of the "victim" in a story for emotional appeal or pathos, while the antagonist who has just been "caught with the goods" or has been forced into a contradiction in his or her defense, will be subjected to a similar close-up shot with the camera angle slightly looking down on the figure and capturing various facial expressions, eye movements, or a brow that is covered with perspiration. One need only reflect back to the "Great Debates" of 1960 between a young, composed John Kennedy and a pale, perspiring Richard Nixon to appreciate the power of visual imagery through television. The potential persuasive power of the use of camera angle variation is noted by Adams when he states that, "Camera angle does appear to influence the viewer's perception of television speakers. Skillful use of various camera angles was one of the earliest cinemagraphic techniques. Directors shot upward toward a subject to install a sense of power, dominance, and strength. They angled

the camera downward to imply weakness. This inference made through the camera angle is, in Bretz's terms, the 'principle of dominance.'"[21]

The nonverbal symbolism inherent in visual imagery represents yet another means of persuasion that may affect the audience's perception of an event, a person or an institution. A favorite technique of "60 Minutes" employed by the use of visual graphics is evident at the outset of each segment as the correspondent-narrator introduces the story. In the background a massive graphic pictorally serves as a symbolic representation concerning the story being introduced. For example, in the story about Medicaid ripoffs discussed earlier, the graphic introducing this story showed a physician's medical carrybag stuffed with dollar bills. Another example of such symbolism occurred in the previously mentioned story investigating the Florida religious sect that regarded marijuana as their chief sacrament. The graphic, with the title, "Holy Smoke" printed across its front, showed various religious relics and artifacts with the picture of a marijuana leaf and several rolled marijuana joints or "reefer." I would argue that these graphics act as persuasive symbols and serve to initiate the value-oriented themes that are reinforced with repeated symbolic images throughout the story. An illustration would be a story on those insurance companies selling policies to minorities and elderly victims. As may be expected, "60 Minutes" decided to interview a black, poor, uneducated, elderly woman during the program. The woman became a symbolic representation for <u>all</u> minorities be they black, elderly, poor, or uneducated. In effect, this woman became an <u>icon</u> or symbolic victim that could be identified by the viewer. David Culbert, in his essay, "Historians and the Visual Analysis of Television News,"

explains the impact of visual imagery and symbolism in covering the Vietnam Tet offensive in 1968 when NBC cameras witnessed a bloodly execution of a suspected Viet Cong terrorist by General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, chief of the South Vietnamese national police. Culbert asserts:

> The visual record of General Loan's act (television newsfilm . . .) contributed to dissillusionment about the war aims which proved unanswerable. It became a symbol (something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention; especially a material object used to represent something invisible) for the peace movement. No government spokesman found words about 'democratic progress' which could refute the visual impression of what General Loan had done. . . . The student of television news should recognize that this visual microcosm (a diminutive, representative world; a system analogous to a much larger system in constitution and configuration) gains much of its meaning from the willingness of so many in 1968 to believe the worst about the chances for American military success in Vietnam. This overall context became the code which enabled citizens to read so much into the . . . newsfilm. But what stuck was the visual image, not merely the context which made it so potent.[22]

Just as the impact of the Loan execution shaped perceptions and attitudes concerning the Vietnam conflict, "60 Minutes" incorporates visual imagery and symbolism for the same purpose. As McLuhan would have us believe about television as a "cool" medium, this adds to audience involvement and participation in the drama of the newsmagazine and allows the viewer to "read into" the event in an extremely arbitrary manner.

One final area of visual imagery that is of particular interest for the critic examining the rhetorical aspects of "60 Minutes," is the relationship between the verbal content or imagery (audio) and the visual imagery (video) in each dramatic story. It is not surprising that this relationship exists, but it is perplexing that the rhetorical critic of

television newscasting has given it such little attention. McLuhan's discussion of print as a medium and the comparison with the visual medium of television may be most illuminating for our understanding of the audio-visual relationship in the "60 Minutes" drama. The influence of print on the visual mode of communication is striking in television newscasting. This applies to local, network, and "special events" newscasting, such as the documentary and the increasingly popular "docu-drama," as well as the newsmagazine. In "60 Minutes," this is illustrated in several ways. Adams asserts that, "For the viewer, the relationship between the audio and video portions of a television newscast should not be presumed to be a simple one. Psychological theory indicates the interactions may be quite complex. . . . Visual images do not appear to be just another series of messages which are absorbed precisely along with verbal transmissions. Activities shown on film, or videotape, or at the anchor desk may distract from as well as reinforce information conveyed orally, depending on the pacing, density, and compatibility of audio and video messages. Thus not only may visual image be important in itself, it may be particularly crucial in its interactions with the audio it accompanies."[23] Similarly, "60 Minutes" incorporates a very strategic interaction between the verbal and visual images in each dramatic story.

We have already discussed how each opening segment of a story begins with the correspondent-narrator seated in front of an enlarged graphic-pictoral that serves as backdrop. The beginning segment also illustrates another way print or the verbal message influences the visual portion. As a news magazine, "60 Minutes" opens each show or program with a preview of what stories will be covered that evening and which correspondent will

cover them. In addition to arousing the audience's expectations and gaining the interest of the viewer, this portion of the program is visually appealing because the television screen takes the actual form of a "magazine" cover. This visual magazine also has its own title, "60 Minutes," just as any other magazine would on its cover. I would argue that this tends to impose print characteristics on a visual medium. The result is to enhance the power or authority of the source (i.e., "60 Minutes" and CBS), and to create an intensified perspective or fixed point of view by narrowing and focusing the attention of the audience on what is "in" the magazine. Thus this visual (graphic) takes on certain traits of a print medium or written message and enhances the power, authority, and directedness of the message, while connoting an impression of linearity, precision, and uniformity. This also lends credence to McLuhan's claim that print is really an extension of the visual faculty. In the case of "60 Minutes," it serves to shape and direct the perceptions of the viewer and add to the credibility of the speaker or source.

This interaction of verbal and visual imagery is even more visible, and influential, in the actual development of the stories in each segment of the program. Through this interaction of verbal and visual persuasion, "60 Minutes" creates a rhetorical strategy that conveys a certain impression by either reinforcement or contradiction. This strategy is really argument that employs visual imagery to reinforce the side of the protagonist, while similarly incorporating visuals to contradict or offer counter-argument against the case of the antagonist. Two brief illustrations will illuminate the strategy of counter-argument to contradict the antagonist's case.

A story run in September, 1978 investigated an organization called Pacific Retirement Homes, "an agency of the Methodist Church." Pacific had gone bankrupt and the elderly citizens who had invested their savings with this organization had lost, in most cases, a substantial amount of money, and in some cases, their life savings. The Methodist Church and Pacific became the antagonists in the drama. While a Bishop Golden, representative for the Methodist Church of California, was questioned by the correspondent about the responsibility the Church had for these elderly citizens who had put their trust, faith, and money into their organization, the visuals showed elaborate camera shots of the lavish and plush Methodist churches in various parts of the country. These visuals, shown simultaneously as the audience heard the remarks and comments of Bishop Golden's verbal message, completely contradicted the words of the antagonist and served to cast a negative light on the Methodist Church and Pacific Homes through the creation of an "anti-ethos" or subversive rhetoric.

Another story investigated corporate "perks" by business executives that were being written off for tax purposes. The visuals showed extravagant scenes of business executives and their clients being "wined and dined" in expensive restaurants and social gatherings, and being flown on private jets owned by the corporation to functions like the Super Bowl. These visuals served to undermine the verbal arguments given by the interviewed corporation executives who insisted that these "perks" were a natural and justified way of performing business and corporate transactions.

The visual imagery of "60 Minutes" also functions to enhance or support the verbal message. One example of this was evident during a

segment entitled, "Edward Rubin, M.D." The story centered around the Medicaid fraud in the state of California and specifically investigated the practices of one Edward Rubin, a physician who became the target of the "60 Minutes" investigation. The opening of this particular segment showed Mike Wallace sitting in front of a large graphic of a physician's medical carrybag stuffed with dollar bills. This type of visual imagery is typical of "60 Minutes" and underscores the importance of the relationship between verbal and visual imagery as it shapes the attitudes and beliefs of the audience.

One final area to be considered in the way "60 Minutes" portrays reality and shapes the audience's perceptions of the world is through the editing process. For every 16 feet of film shot for each story, 15 feet is "edited out." This acts as a major determinant in deciding how any given event will be depicted. Epstein asserts that, "Editing involves selecting certain fragments of a film of a given subject and arranging them in an order which appears to represent a coherent view of the event. The same set of pictures can, however, yield different coherent views, depending on how they are edited. 'Given . . . half a dozen shots of different nature and subject, there are any number of possible combinations of the six that, with the right twist of commentary, could make film sense,' a leading film editor suggested."[24]

In addition to the editing of film to maintain the established "themes" or "story lines" in "60 Minutes," the use of "reasks" is a popular tactic. Donovan Moore explains this facet of editing the "60 Minutes" program when he states that, "For purposes of theater, the correspondents themselves are made a part of the story--through close-ups,

occasional glimpses of our man in action and, especially, 'reasks.' It's a technique used by almost all TV news operations, but none has refined it as much as 60 Minutes . . . Which means that almost every time you see Wallace quizzing someone--gesturing, eyebrows raised, maybe with even a little indignation--it has all taken place after the interview; the camera has been turned around and Wallace has 'reasked' his original questions. They are reasked in fact until the producer and correspondent are satisfied with them, preserving, one hopes, the tone and wording of the interview itself."[25] Thus it is through these techniques of editing that "60 Minutes" enhances the dramatic nature of the stories it covers and serves as a prime representation of the media pseudo-event. The remaining section of this essay examines the narrative-dramatic form of this synthetic genre of newscasting.

Narrative and Dramatic Form in "60 Minutes"

As we stated earlier, the nature of the pseudo-event is dramatic, vivid, and newsworthy, while the "image" it depicts is characterized by its believability, simplicity, vivacity, and ambiguity. In addition, it was decided that one function of the pseudo-event was to create a certain impression about a person, group, organization, or institution.

The narrative and dramatic form of "60 Minutes" is rhetorical in nature because it arouses and fulfills an audience's expectations. The use of the narrative format not only enhances the "believability" of a newscast, but functions as a persuasive device through formal appeal, or as Burke would have us believe, the structure or form has appeal simply because it is form, or form for the sake of form. Sperry states,

"Like the fictional narrative, the non-fiction narrative must also be pruned and shaped by the narrator if it is to accomplish its goal; for that goal is not merely to provide information but also to affect the listener in some way; to persuade, or change him, to evoke an emotional response, or simply to interest him. . . . In every narrative, the narrator--the authority who tells the story--is of primary importance, and this must be true for the television news program as for any other narrative."[26]

Richard Gregg, in his discussion of television newscasting, addresses the structural and formal characteristics of narrative when he states that, "Narrative form as it is typically employed by television imposes significant constraints on the events being reported. There must be a story line which is somehow cogent, there must be dramatic movement, and clear beginnings and endings of action. Thus, in a narrative, details are sharpened or flattened to achieve the virtues of simplicity, action and resolution."[27] Thus, "60 Minutes" as a pseudo-event is encased in narrative form, and contains several key elements or characteristics of any pseudo-event; it establishes ethos or trustworthiness through a correspondent-narrator, tends to be simplistic as a result of temporal and spatial constraints, and holds the audience's attention through the portrayal of the protagonist and antagonist in a dramatic conflict. These traits serve not only to "de-contextualize" a news event, but offer us "selections" of reality, therefore, "deflections" of the world and how we are asked to perceive that world. This dramatic and personalized depiction by "60 Minutes" lends credence to McLuhan's claim that television is a "cool" medium because it allows the participant-viewer maximum

involvement in the drama. The audience takes an active role in witnessing the drama and how it unfolds. The verbal and visual imagery, in addition to the narrative-dramatic form, makes "60 Minutes" a prototype of the media pseudo-event. It is rhetorical insofar as it shapes the perceptions of the viewer through a value-oriented interpretation of the world.

CONCLUSION

The formal and substantive traits of the "60 Minutes" program on CBS reflects characteristics manifest in Boorstin's conception of the "pseudo-event." Through both the verbal and visual imagery presented in the context of a narrative format, this popular television "newsmagazine" illustrates the significance of mass media artifacts as "rhetorical document." The television newsmagazine, because it is inherently a value-oriented interpretation of the world, engages in a "selection" of reality, and therefore, a "deflection" of reality. The linguistic and visual imagery helps to shape our perceptions of ideas, people, and institutions through the dramatic portrayal of events that both reflect and act upon the "climate of opinion" of the times. "60 Minutes" represents an "end-product" that is the result of "intersubjective agreement" between the researchers, writers, correspondents, producers, and camerapersons responsible for this genre of media rhetoric. The verbal and visual imagery represent linguistic/graphic patterns that project perceptual images from rhetor ("60 Minutes") to auditor (participant-viewer). The implications of these mediated images are significant for the critic's further understanding of how language affects perception.

It is through perception that we create the reality in which we interact and interpret social situations and events. Gregg states that "all behavior is determined by and pertinent to the perceptual field of the behaving organism . . . behavior is not so much a function of an external event as it is a product of the individual's perception of that event."[28] It is in this light that "60 Minutes" as a pseudo-event functions to shape our perceptions of reality and alter our behavior.

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[21]Adams, pp. 161-162.

[22]Culbert, pp. 141-142.

[23]Adams, pp. 164-165.

[24]Epstein, pp. 174-175.

[25]Donovan Moore, "60 Minutes," Rolling Stone magazine, January 12, 1978, p. 46.

[26]Sharon Lynn Sperry, "Television News as Narrative," in Television as a Cultural Force, eds. Richard Adler and Douglass Cater (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), p. 132.

[27]Gregg, "Rhetoric of Political Newscasting." p. 224.

[28]Gregg, "A Phenomenologically Oriented Approach," p. 83.